(b) if so, the decline in prices of sugar expected as a result thereof; and

(c) the impact of this decision on the overall performance of sugar industry and availability of sugar in the market and under PDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) The mills who have obtained judicial directives are governed by the directions of the Hon'ble Courts in various writ petitions and civil suits.

(b) and (c) The availability of sugar in the open market as well as under Public Distribution System (PDS) has not been affected in any way.

Sugar release mechanism

5005. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the sugar release mechanism is being placed in Ninth Schedule of the Constitution;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to ensure proper implementation of this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) to (c) The amendment of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 is in hand to safeguard the interests of the sugarcane growers, producers of sugar and the general public. It is further proposed to place the Amending Act in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Procurement of Foodgrains

5006. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA :

SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) what is Government's latest policy for procurement of foodgrains, wheat and rice to meet any eventuality;

(b) whether drought has reduced the foodgrain stocks; and

(c) if so, the action taken to replenish the stock adequately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) : (a) Under the present procurement policy, all the paddy and